House with an installed capacity of 5 x 50 MW. The Dam was completed in 1985 and the last 50 MW Unit was commissioned in 1992. The work on Rengali Irrigation Project Phase-I comenced in 1978.

(b) The latest estimated cost of Rengali Irrigation Project Phase-I is Rs. 1892.50 crores. Anticipated expenditure upto March, 1996 is Rs. 216.73 crores. The barrage and appurtenant works have been completed except some minor items. Works on left main canal, right main canal and Parajang distributary are in progress.

(c) Yes, Sir. Though the dam was completed in 1985, irrigation has not yet commenced.

(d) The main reason for delay in completion of the canals is inadeguate provision of funds.

(e) Part of the left main canal (0-30 km.) is included in the Water Resources Consolidation Project which is receiving financial assistance from the World Bank. Central Loan Assistance of Rs. 15.00 crores has been approved for the project by the Ministry of Water Resources during 1996-97 for expediting implementation of the Project.

[Translation]

Firing in Border Areas

2481 SHRI JAI PRAKASH AGARWAL : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state

(a) whether the Government have conveyed their reaction to the neighbouring countries regarding stray incidents of firing in the border areas, particularly in the Siachen glacier area on Indo-Pak border during the last three years.

(b) if so, the details thereof, country-wise;

(c) whether the Government have utilised or propose to utilise the international fora to express their reaction regarding occurence of such incidents in the Siachen glacier area

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL): I am to (e). Government invariably take note of incidents of firing on the border and take them up as appropriate. There have been several unprovoked firings by Pakistani troops along the Indo-Pak border in Jammu & Kashmir, including in the Siachen area. Depending upon the gravity of such incidents, the matter, as considered necessary, is taken up with the concerned Pakistani authorities at appropriate levels.

The Government constantly monitor the situation along India's national borders and take appropriate action to safeguard national security. There is no occasion to utilise international fora for this purpose.

[English]

Artificial Sweeteners

2482. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Artificial Sweeteners may have side effects" appearing in the 'Business Standard' dated November 13, 1996;

(b) if so, the facts of the matter reported therein as per his Ministry's information and research conducted by it or its agencies;

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(d) the steps taken or proposed to be taken to prohibit or control the sale of Aspartame', the chemical compound sold under various brand names in India and abroad as a low-calorie alternative to sugar?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) According to the Newspaper report there is a divergence of opinion regarding the consumption of Aspartame, artificial sweetneer. While the Journal of Diabetic Association of India prescribes consumption upto 50mg per kg of Body weight on a daily basis as "safe", many nutritionists are of the view that sutained consumption of Aspartame, a sweetening agent used as a low-calories alternative to sugar, over a period of time, can produce side effects which could show up after six months to a year of regular use

However, according to the report published by Joint Expert Committee of FAO/WHO on Food Additives, Aspartame has been classified as a sweetening agent/ flavour enhancer having Acceptable Daily Intake (ADI) of 40mg per kg body weight

(c) and (d) The Prevention of Food Adulteration Rules, 1955 permit use of Aspartame as a table top sweetner for diabetic use only on medical advice under proper packaging and labelling

International Conference on Indian Ocean Community

2483. SHRI MUKHTAR ANIS : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether India was represented at the International Conference on Indian Ocean Community held in Tehran in early November, 1996,

(b) if so, the names and designations of Indian representatives and

(c) the brief particulars of major decisions taken by the Conference?